GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:213
ANSWERED ON:07.12.2005
UNIVERSAL SERVICE OBLIGATION FUND
Singh Shri Rajiv Ranjan (Lalan);Suman Shri Ramji Lal

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether telephone operating companies utilize Universal Service Obligation Fund for the development and expansion of telecom services in rural areas;

(b) if so, the names of the companies alongwith the amount utilised by them from the said fund during the year 2004-05 and the current year 2005-06 till date;

(c) the details of rural areas in the country where the said fund was utilised; and

(d) the details of works carried out in telecom sector from the said fund?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 213 FOR 7TH DECEMBER, 2005 REGARDING UNIVERSAL SERVICE OBLIGATION FUND.

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The names of the companies along with the amount of subsidy disbursed to them during the year 2004-05 and the current year 2005-06 up to 30.9.2005 are:-

Sl. No.	Name of Service Provider	Amount of subsidy disbursed (Rs. in crores) 2004-05	2005-06 (till 30.9.2005)
1	Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited	1,311.42	762.99
2	Reliance Infocomm Limited	0.90	3.71
3	Tata Tele Services Limited	1.12	0.19
4	Tata Tele Services (Maharashtra) Limited	0.95	0.70
5	Bharti Infotel Limited	0.10	0
6	Shyam Telelink Limited	0.10	0
Total		1,314.59	767.59

(c) & (d) Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) is providing financial support for the following major activities in rural and remote areas of all the States in the country:-

(i) Operation and maintenance of nearly 5.20 lakh Village Public Telephones (VPTs) covering more than 90% villages of the country.

(ii) Provision of VPTs in the remaining 66,822 uncovered villages which have more than 100 population and which do not lie in thick forest areas/ naxalite infested areas etc.

(iii) Replacement of 1.86 lakh Multi-Access Radio Relay (MARR) technology VPTs.

(iv) Provision of Rural Community Phones (RCPs) in 46,253 villages having population more than 2000 and having no PCO.

(v) Support for Rural Household Direct Exchange Lines installed prior to 1.4.2002 towards the difference between TRAI prescribed rental and the rental charged by the service provider for a limited period of 01.04.2002 to 31.01.2004.

(vi) Support for RDELs installed after 1.4.2002.

(vii) Provision of RDELs on demand in 1685 commercially unviable Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs) with effect from the first quarter of January 2006.